

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 258081

PASS TO RICHARD BLOOMFIELD

FOLLOWING REPEAT SAN JOSE 4438 SENT ACTION SECSTATE
INFO BOGOTA CARACAS GUATEMALA MANAGUA QUITO SAN SALVADOR
TEGUCIGALPA NOVEMBER 21ST:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 4438

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON OAS CS

SUBJECT: THE AFTERMATH OF QUITO

REF: STATE 252031

SAN JOSE 4381

1. IN MY FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER
SINCE HIS RETURN FROM QUITO, FACIO WAS VERY CORDIAL AND
APPARENTLY RECONCILED TO THE FAILURE OF HIS EFFORTS THERE.
I HAD CLEAR IMPRESSION IN COURSE OF EXTENDED INTERVIEW,
WHICH TOUCHED ON SEVERAL TOPICS, THAT FACIO WAS SIGNALLING
HIS DESIRE TO PUT THE QUITO MEETING BEHIND US AND TO
MAINTAIN CLOSE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITH USG
ON OTHER MULTILATERAL AS WELL AS BITLATERAL ISSUES.
THIS IS NOT TO SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT HE WAS NOT
WOUNDED--PERSONALLY AND POLITICALLY--IN QUITO AND
THAT HE DOES NOT HARBOR SOME RESENTMENT OF OUR POSTURE
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THERE.

2. FACIO EXPLAINED TO ME, AS HE SAYS HE HAD TO USDEL IN QUITO, THAT HE WAS MISQUOTED IN EARLY PRESS REPORTS OF CRITICISM OF U.S., ESPECIALLY OVER ABSENCE OF SECRETARY KISSINGER, AND THAT HE HAD GONE TO CONSIDERABLE PAINS TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT. HE DID REPEAT HIS OPINION THAT THE U.S. HAD "OVERDONE" ITS HANDS-OFF POSITION AT QUITO, BUT HE SEEMED REASSURED THAT THIS DOES NOT PORTEND LESS THAN A FULLY ACTIVE U.S. ROLE ON OTHER ISSUES.

3. THE FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT COSTA RICA IS NOT PLANNING TO RECOGNIZE CUBA. HE THOUGHT IT VERY UNLIKELY THAT CUBA WILL BE INVITED TO THE MARCH MFM IN BUENOS AIRES.

4. MEANWHILE, SAN JOSE EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE WAKE OF FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO'S WIDELY PERCEIVED "DEFEAT" IN QUITO HAS BEEN NEITHER INTENSIVE NOR PARTICULARLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE MINISTER. "LA NACION" FOLLOWED UP THE MEETING WITH ONLY A SINGLE EDITORIAL IN WHICH THE NEWSPAPER CAREFULLY APPROVED OF THE CONFERENCE RESULTS, BUT PUT THEM DOWN TO THE EXCEEDINGLY COMPLEX AND HETEROGENEOUS NATURE OF LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS WHICH FACIO FAILED TO ADEQUATELY UNDERSTAND. "LA NACION" HAD SENT ITS STAR REPORTER TO COVER THE CONFERENCE AND AS A RESULT THE PAPER'S REPORTING WAS COMPLETE, INTERESTING, AND SLIGHTLY WEIGHTED IN FAVOR OF THOSE IN OPPOSITION TO LIFTING THE SANCTIONS. "LA REPUBLICA" ALSO RAN ONE POST-MORTEM EDITORIAL WHICH GENERALLY POINTED UP THE CORRECTNESS OF FACIO'S POSITION, BUT ATTRIBUTED HIS LACK OF SUCCESS TO THE FACT THAT SUPERPOWER POLITICS, WHILE LESS TENSE THAN IN EARLIER YEARS, CONTINUE TO PLAY A PREDOMINANT ROLE. FACIO'S OWN SEVERAL PUBLIC STATEMENTS, BACKTRACKING FROM THE ANGRY LINE THAT WAS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CONFERENCE, WERE CARRIED ON INSIDE PAGES. OUR OVERALL IMPRESSION IS THAT THE COUNTRY IS A LITTLE SELF-CONSCIOUS OVER THE IDEA THAT ITS FOREIGN MINISTER GOT HIMSELF TOO FAR OUT IN FRONT, FAILED, AND IS NOW

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RECEIVING CRITICISM FROM MANY QUARTERS.
THERE IS VERY LITTLE PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE U.S. POSITION.
LANE

UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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NNN

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